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transmits a set of documents having a high relevance to any desired summary sent by the client, to the client.

REMARKS

The Applicants request the Examiner to provide an indication that the certified priority document filed on January 2, 2002 in the parent application to which the present application claims benefits under 35 USC §120 (U.S. Serial No. 09/442,147) has been safely received.

The Applicants request the Examiner to initial and return copies of the PTO-1449 Forms submitted with the Information Disclosure Statements filed on February 15, 2002 as an indication that the documents have been properly considered. For the Examiner's convenience, copies of the PTO-1449 Forms are enclosed.

The Applicants request reconsideration of the rejection.

Claims 10-18 are pending, and were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Paulsen, Jr. et al, US 6,078,917 (Paulsen), in view of Rubinstein et al, US 5,913,215 (Rubinstein). The Applicants traverse as follows.

Neither Paulsen nor Rubinstein teaches the feature of the invention in which a weighted term list is prepared from documents resulting from a search of a first document

database, wherein the term weights reflect the importance of the terms in the first document database, and the documents having a high relevance to the search input to the first document database. Further, neither reference discloses that the first search input is a set of keywords, fragments of a document or any desired set of documents, or that the search results of the first document database are used to derive a second search input for searching the second document database, wherein each term in the selected documents from the second document database is weighted considering the importance of the term both in the first document database and the second document database, the weight being used to calculate the relevance of the selected documents.

By these features of the claimed invention, the weighting of the terms is used to determine the distinction of the search results from the overall contents of the first database, and then to determine the relevance of the results of the second search. Thus, the relevance of a document found in the first database is determined by distinguishing its term weighting by comparison to other documents in the entire first database, and the second search is performed using the second search input (derived from the first search results), with the term weighting determined with respect to the overall contents

of both the first and second databases determining the relevance of the search results of the second database.

While Paulsen discloses a searching system in which a relevance is determined based on correspondence of "signatures" of selected documents, the second search of Paulsen is conducted with respect to the same database. There is neither a suggestion nor a disclosure of performing the search of a second database using the weighted results of the first database.

Moreover, while Rubinstein discloses a concurrent search of a plurality of search engines located at respective World Wide Web sites, the results of a search of one site are not used to search a second site. Therefore, combining Rubinstein with Paulsen results in a Paulsen-type search and re-search of any one of the World Wide Web sites taught by Rubinstein, or possibly, the concurrent search and re-search of plural World Wide Web sites (without cross-searching). The combination of teachings does not lead the person of ordinary skill to take the results of a first search, weight the terms, perform a second search of a second database based on the first search results, and then determining relevance of the second search based on term weighting determined with respect to the entire contents of both databases.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the Applicants request reconsideration of the rejection and allowance of the claims.

Respectfully submitted,



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MARKED-UP VERSION OF REWRITTEN CLAIM(S)

10. (Amended) A service for searching documents wherein servers comprising document databases and programs to manipulate said databases are dispersed over a network and a client connected to said servers performs a document search, said service providing a document search method [having a function to change over between plural document databases, and a function to search a set of documents having a high relevance to a search input from a selected document database in the order of higher relevance, the input being a set of keywords, fragments of a document or any desired set of documents, wherein the search results from said document database can be used as an input for searching another database] comprising the steps of:

making a weighted term list from documents resulting from a search of a first document database, the weight of each term reflecting the importance of the term in the first document database, the documents having a high relevance to a first search input to said first document database, and the first search input being a set of keywords, fragments of a document or any desired set of the documents,

performing a search of a second document database;

wherein the search results from said first document database are used to derive a second search input for performing said search of said second document database, and wherein each term in the documents selected from the search of the second document database is weighted considering the importance of the term both in the first document database and the second document database, and the weight being used to calculate the relevance of the selected documents from the second document database.

11. (Amended) A service for searching documents as defined in claim 10, wherein an interface is provided in which a set of documents from the search result of [one] said first document database [can be] are selected or deselected, and a set of documents selected from the search result [can be used as the] are used in preparing the second search input for searching [another] said second document database.

12. (Amended) A service for searching documents as defined in claim 11, wherein a summary containing only topic words in the first search input is used to perform [a] the second search.

13. (Amended) A service for searching documents as defined in claim 11, wherein a client transmits a set of documents in [a] the first search input to a server where [a selected] said first document database is stored, receives a summary comprising only topic words related to the set of documents which is sent, sends [a] the second search input corresponding to said summary reflecting a user's evaluation of the summary to a server where [another] said second document database is stored, and receives a search result [accordingly] from the search of said second document database.

14. (Amended) A service for searching documents as defined in claim 10, wherein a summary containing only topic words in [a] the first search input is used to perform [a] the second search.

15. (Amended) A service for searching documents as defined in claim 10, wherein a client transmits a set of documents in [a] the first search input to a server where [a selected] said first document database is stored, receives a summary comprising only topic words related to the set of documents which is sent, sends [a] the second search input

corresponding to said summary reflecting a user's evaluation of the summary to a server where [another] said second document database is stored, and receives a search result [accordingly] from the search of said second document database.

16. (Amended) A service for searching documents as defined in claim 15, wherein said server produces a summary from topic words relevant to [a] the set of documents sent by the client and transmits the summary to the client, and searches and transmits a set of documents having a high relevance to any summary sent by the client, to the client.

17. (Amended) A service for searching documents as defined in claim 15, wherein said client has an interface for specifying a set of documents for the first search input and document databases to be searched, the set of documents in the first search input is sent to a server specified by the user, a summary of the set of documents is received from the specified server, the summary received is sent to a server comprising [another] said second document database, and search results are received from the [another server] search of said second document database and displayed.

18. (Amended) A service for searching documents wherein servers comprising document databases and programs to manipulate said databases are dispersed over a network and a client connected to said servers performs a document search, said service providing a [function for] document search method in which the client [to transmit] transmits a set of documents in a first search input to one of said servers where a [selected] first document database is stored, [receive] receives a summary comprising only topic words related to the set of documents which is sent, send a second search input corresponding to said summary reflecting a user's evaluation of the summary to a server where [another] a second document database is stored, and [receive] receives a search result [accordingly] from the search of the second document database, wherein said server storing the first document database produces [a] the summary of topic words relevant to the set of documents sent by the client and transmits the summary to the client, and searches and transmits a set of documents having a high relevance to any desired summary sent by the client, to the client.